

Message Text

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TAGS: SGEN BB

SUBJ: MARINE & SHORELINE RECREATION

REF: STATE 225650

1. GOB INFORMS US THAT POLICY DOCUMENTS, REGULATIONS AND LEGISLATION DEALING WITH SEA COAST RECREATION ARE SPARSE. OPERATIVE LEGISLATION IS "PARKS AND BEACHES COMMISSION ACT" WHICH MERELY CREATES PUBLIC COMMISSION FOR PURPOSE OF PROTECTING AND PRESERVING RECREATIONAL AREAS. ACT ALSO MAKES IT AN OFFENSE TO LITTER OR OTHERWISE DEFACE SUCH AREAS. IF ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDANCE GROUP WISHES COPIES OF THIS BRIEF ACT, WE WILL PURCHASE AND SEND IT.

2. GOB IS KEENLY AWARE THAT ITS LAWS REGARDING PROTECTION OF RECREATION AREAS AND ENVIRONMENT ARE INADEQUATE. GARBAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL, STRAY DOGS AND LACK OF TREES ARE TOPICS NOW RECEIVING HIGH-LEVEL CRITICAL ATTENTION IN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY AND MEDIA. GOB ITSELF HAS PLEDGED ACTION AND POINTS TO ALLEGEDLY IMPROVED METHODS OF REFUSE COLLECTION AND ITS PLANS FOR UNDERWATER PARK ON WEST COAST AS EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS. NEVERTHELESS, SERIOUS PROBLEMS REMAIN. SEWAGE IS OFTEN PIPED OUT TO SEA WHERE IT IS USUALLY DISPERSED BY CURRENTS; HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN INSTANCES OF ITS FOULING CERTAIN BEACH AREAS. THERE IS NOW VIRTUALLY NO PROGRAM FOR PROTECTING BARBADOS' INSHORE REEF AREAS

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FROM DEPREDATIONS OF GREEDY CORAL AND SHELL HUNTERS AND ITS IN-

SHORE SEA LIFE FROM ATTACK BY OVERZEALOUS SPEARFISHERMEN. ITS RELATIVELY UNPOPULATED EAST COAST IS OFTEN FOULED BY OIL RESULTING FROM OFFSHORE DISCHARGE BY TANKERS. PARKS AND BEACHES COMMISSION IS IN PROCESS OF DRAWING UP LEGISLATION TO PROTECT PROPOSED UNDERWATER PARK AND INTENDS TO STUDY WAYS AND MEANS OF EXTENDING THIS PROTECTION TO OTHER AREAS AS WELL.

3. BARBADOS AND MOST OF WINDWARD/LEEWARD ISLANDS DO BETTER ON ISSUE OF ACCESS TO BEACH AREAS. IN MOST OF EMBASSY'S TERRITORY COMMON LAW GUARANTEES ACCESS BY ALL TO HIGH WATER MARK. THUS ALTHOUGH PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF WATERFRONT PROPERTY IS PERMITTED, IN PRACTICE USE OF BEACH ITSELF IS OPEN TO ALL.

4. TIME FRAME FOR THIS REPORT DID NOT PERMIT OUR OBTAINING DATA FROM MANY OTHER ISLANDS UNDER OUR JURISDICTION BUT WE BELIEVE THAT MOST OF THEM SHARE BARBADOS' PROBLEM OF INADEQUATE LEGISLATION TO PROTECT COAST RECREATIONAL RESOURCES. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN MOST OF THESE ISLANDS ARE SUCH THAT, WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, ANY INCOME-CREATING PROJECT WOULD BE WELCOMED WITH LITTLE THOUGHT TO ITS IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENT OR RECREATIONAL AREAS.
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